

It's Not Too Late to Get a Flu Shot

Download this information graphic at <http://www.flu.gov/prevention-vaccination/vaccination/>

There is still time to protect your children and yourself from the flu in what remains of a severe influenza season.

"Everyone seems to know that the elderly are particularly vulnerable, but so too are children," says William Rodriguez, M.D., Ph.D., a pediatrician at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). "Severe complications are most common in children under age 2, and all children ages 6 months and older should be immunized."

Rodriguez notes that in each of the last 10 flu seasons, between 43 and 153 children died from influenza in the U.S. An average 20,000 children a year under age 5 are hospitalized. So far this year, 16 deaths of children under age 18 have been reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Currently, 43 states are reporting widespread flu outbreaks, with the District of Columbia and remaining states—Washington, Oregon, California, Arizona, Montana, South Dakota and Missouri—reporting localized outbreaks.

People are generally immunized in the fall, but they can still get protection from the flu for what remains of the flu season—even though immunization

takes several weeks to take effect. The season usually peaks in January or February, with some cases continuing into the spring and even beyond.

"This is particularly late in the flu season for very young children, because to optimize immune response, children between the ages of 6 and 35 months need two shots, four weeks apart, during their first season of vaccination," said Rodriguez. "However, even one shot provides some protection, so even now there is time to get some benefit."

As of the end of November 2012, 112 million Americans were immunized for this flu season, leaving the majority unprotected as of that time, according to CDC.

Although some locations have stopped offering the flu vaccine, which each year is approved by FDA, a plentiful supply remains available. Consumers can find out where to get a flu shot by calling doctor's offices, clinics, pharmacies and supermarkets. [FDA](#)

Find this and other Consumer Updates at www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates

Sign up for free e-mail subscriptions at www.fda.gov/consumer/consumernews.html

FLU.GOV

Flu Season Is Here Get Vaccinated Today

Who should get the vaccine?

EVERYONE 6 MONTHS AND OLDER	PEOPLE AT HIGH RISK
Everyone 6 MONTHS OF AGE AND OLDER should get the flu vaccine. Seasonal flu vaccines have a very good safety track record.	It is especially IMPORTANT to GET THE VACCINE IF YOU, SOMEONE YOU LIVE WITH, OR SOMEONE YOU CARE FOR IS AT HIGH RISK of complications from the flu.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children & Infants Pregnant Women Seniors People with Disabilities People with Health Conditions Travelers & People Living Abroad

How should I get the vaccine?

There are TWO TYPES of vaccine, the flu shot and the nasal spray. Both protect against the same virus strains.

FLU SHOT	NASAL SPRAY
Made with inactivated (killed) flu virus	Made with weakened live flu virus
Given by needle	Given with a mist sprayed in your nose
Approved for use in healthy people older than 6 months and people with chronic health conditions	Approved for healthy people between the ages of 2 and 49, except pregnant women

Can I get the flu from the vaccine?

NO, YOU CAN'T GET THE FLU	MILD REACTIONS
NO, YOU CAN'T GET THE FLU from the flu vaccine. The flu vaccine protects you from the flu, not the common cold. But you may experience some side effects.	MILD REACTIONS such as soreness, headaches, and fever are common side effects of the flu vaccine.

When should I get the vaccine?

Get your flu shot or spray TODAY! Flu season usually peaks in January or February, but it can occur as late as May. EARLY VACCINATION IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE, but it is not too late to get the vaccine in December, January or beyond.

Where can I get the vaccine?

Visit [FLUGOV](#) and use the **Flu Vaccine Finder** to find out where to get the flu vaccine. Enter zip code.

FLU.GOV
A federal government website managed by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W. • Washington, D.C. 20201